I trust I have been able to show that from the fragments brought under review, huddled at present into any out-of-the-way corner or dark receptacle (in which it strangely seems Bath hopes to cause to be forgotten these remains of her ancient grandeur), there is yet sufficient left to enable us to make an almost perfect restoration of two of the architectural works of Roman Britain, and not unworthy of the consideration of the British Archæological Association.

LECTURE VII.

SECOND SERIES.

April 21, 1852.

AN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE THE PRINCIPLES WHICH SHOULD DETERMINE FORM IN THE DECORATIVE ARTS,

BY

M. DIGBY WYATT, Esq.

It has pleased the beneficent Designer of "the world and all that therein is," not only to surround man with the ever-varying and inexhaustible beauties of Nature, and to endow him with the gift of sight to perceive her graces; but he has been pleased also to confer upon him a mind to understand, and a hand to imitate them. These gifts are clearly talents committed to our charge, and to be accounted for by us. The same Power

> "That gave us in this dark estate
> To know the good from ill,"

conferred upon us also an unerring natural test to distinguish the beautiful from the mean or ugly. That test is the sensation of delight which invariably accompanies our recognition of beauty, moral or physical. Whenever the powers of the mind are concentrated upon any of the great external evidences of Omnipotence — upon "the heavens above, or on the earth beneath, or on the waters which are under the earth" — it is impossible to refrain from pouring forth a tribute of silent but heartfelt admiration; and at such moments the Creator, as if to mark His approbation of the sacrifice, lulls for a while all memory of earthly pain or care, and pours peace and happiness into the soul. Thus it is that "a thing of beauty is a joy for ever." It is impossible to examine the smallest object upon which the skill of Divinity has been exercised — a shell, a flower, or an insect — without feeling a longing to know somewhat of the mysterious laws which make that individual specimen of design so perfect, and without experiencing a desire to emulate the marvellous powers of creation. The first sensation of the exercise of such powers we feel to be Godlike. Thus it is man naturally attempts, in his feeble way, to emulate the

loftier faculties of Divinity; and thus "'tis to create, and in creating live a being more intense, that we endow with form our fancy." From such exertions spring all that is ideal or poetical in every art.

Whenever we attempt to penetrate the wondrous system that makes all nature one vast harmony, it is impossible to refrain from feeling that "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform;" and that it is as yet our portion only to see the full light of His majesty "as through a glass darkly." Enough, however, is still apparent to teach us that there are conditions of harmonious relation which pervade the most exquisite forms in Divine creation; and it is only while catching a faint reflexion from their glories that we can hope to succeed, in the slightest degree, in throwing a veil of beauty over our comparatively insignificant productions.

The first operation indispensable to any attempt to define the principles which should determine form in decorative art, must obviously be an investigation into those conditions of divine design in concord with which all human attempts at its imitation must be moulded, before a supreme sensation of delight can be produced. The occurrence of such a sensation we have already pointed out as the constant and unerring test of real beauty.

We propose, therefore, in the first place, to draw such general inferences together, concerning the great scheme of design manifested in the noblest works of Nature, as we have been enabled to collect, either from the experiences of others, or our own study of the subject.

The second operation must evidently be, to trace the application of these general inferences to the various material branches into which the different necessities of man, or his sympathies, have divided all those decorative arts which minister to his cravings for enjoyment on all occasions. We purpose, therefore, in the second place, to take a rapid survey of the principal members of that great family, and to point out some of the innumerable enactments of Nature, specially affecting several of the most important individual "departments of practical art." Never in the whole history of the past has such a body of appropriate illustration of this branch of our subject been collected as was brought together in the vast extent of the ever memorable Palace of Industry, and it was impossible to examine carefully the rich store of material enclosed with its glassy walls, without gathering some few valuable hints.

In entering on the first division of our perhaps too ambitious attempt, we are overcome with a sense of the infinite minuteness of our knowledge of the great conditions of creation. We recognise an almost universal beauty throughout the works of Nature by the exercise of some faculty, as intuitive as memory, and not less inexplicable when we essay to predicate concerning its ineffably mysterious constitution. It has been well observed by some metaphysical writers, that in the developement of the intellectual powers, the first effort is to realize, the second to enjoy, and the third to reason. In obedience to this theory, the first and constant effort of every child is to feel, to see, to use its senses, and to verify the fact of its existence by ascertaining its physical relation to all by which it is surrounded. Its second and occasional effort is to eat, to drink, to smell, to show pain and pleasure, likes and dislikes, and to observe and

treasure up such experiences as can affect its subsequent enjoyment. The third effort is to exercise the gift of thought, and to form conclusions by other processes than those of direct sensation. Now we, as respects our knowledge of divine beauty, can be regarded only as very little children; and, if we would improve upon our condition of ignorance, instinct leads us onwards through parallel states of progress. Let but the first effort of one totally uneducated in Art be to see and to feel Nature, to look upon her works with an observant eye, and he will almost instantly find himself led on by unerring sensations of delight to the second stage of advancement. In that stage he will enjoy, discriminate, select, store in his memory, and at length endeavour either to reproduce, or cause to be reproduced, those natural objects, contact with which has caused him the greatest amount of pleasure. Thus the first phase of all art is rude direct imitation. No sooner does he arrive at the full developement of his secondary condition, than he passes into the third. He begins to speculate upon the sensations he experiences, upon the phenomena of their recurrence, and on the means whereby he may be enabled by his own descriptions or imitations of the original types, to convey to others the pleasure he himself derived from a contemplation of them—thus the ignorant may grow into the Connoisseur, and thus the child into the Artist.

A knowledge of the sequence of these natural phases of transition points out the course by which alone special education in decorative art can be brought to a successful issue. Surround the pupil with every attainable example of general beauty of form, if he is to be a general artist or draughtsman; make him acquainted with all the antecedent productions in his specialty, if he is to be a special designer. Show him only as much as possible of what is good, whether general or special; then his sense of enjoyment will teach him selection, and he will store his memory with the best. Practise his hand as you educate his senses, and the feeling of power will soon come upon him. Reason will assert its empire, and inquiry will be stimulated. Once roused, effort will succeed effort, and thus in time the pupil will grow into the Master. As it is impossible to arrive at correct theories in science, except by the analysis of accumulated observations, firstly of things, secondly of properties, and thirdly of relations, so it is impossible to assume any general conclusions concerning Divine design without passing through the three stages of realization, enjoyment, and reflection.

When we take into consideration, on the one hand, the shortness of life and the limitation of the powers of man, and, on the other, the extent and illimitable divisibility of matter and its incessant changes in form and application, we cannot but feel conscious in how slight a degree the best disposed and most talented student of Nature can have become acquainted with her innumerable phenomena, a thorough knowledge and enjoyment of which we have shown to be indispensable to any just general conclusions. It is only by the transmission from generation to generation of accumulating experiences and deductions, that the very few points we are about to indicate have been assumed as universal recurrences in the external forms in which Nature pours forth her bounteous gifts to man.

The first quality with which the observer must be struck is the infinite *variety* of form which pervades creation. On attempting to reason con-

cerning it, he perceives its dependence upon the functions each object, and the component parts of each object, are ordained to fulfil; hence he will at once recognise the fact, that form is in every case, if not dependent on, at least coincident with, structural *fitness*. When the most complex flower is submitted to the test of a scientific botanical examination, no particles are found to be adventitious—all are concerned in fulfilling the appointed functions of vegetable physiology. As those functions vary with the growth of the plant, so in every case does its form—changing from tender bud to blooming flower, and from blooming flower to reproductive seed-pod, as each successive change of purpose progresses. Infinite *variety* and unerring *fitness* thus appear to govern all form in Nature.

While the former of these properties demonstrates her infinite power of complexity, the latter restrains the former, and binds all in beautiful *simplicity*. In every case ornament appears the offspring of necessity alone, and wherever structural necessity permits the simplest lines in every case consistent with the variety of uses of the object are adopted. Thus, the principal forest trees, which spring erect and hardy from the ground, in their normal state, uninfluenced by special conditions of light or heat, shoot straight aloft, with boughs equally balanced on all sides, growing so symmetrically, that a regular cone or oviform would, in most cases, precisely define their outline; and thus the climbing plants, from their first appearance, creep along the ground in weak and wayward lines, until they reach something stronger and more erect than themselves; to this they cling, and from it hang either vertically or in the most graceful festoons; to each its character of form as of purpose—to each the simplest line consistent with its appointed function and propriety of expression. From Nature's delight in *simplicity*, man probably derived his earliest perception of geometrical figures. The term horizontal at once betrays the source from which our idea of such a line may have been derived. Upon the horizon, as a base, endless perpendiculars are erected in every plant that pierces the soil at right angles to its tangent. A plain in Nature furnishes the idea of a plane in geometry. Every variety of triangle is indicated by the outline of the snow-clad peaks of the loftiest mountains; every kind of cone by their substance. The thin clouds that sweep along the sky at sunset, hanging over the distant blue line of the ocean, form exquisite parallels, and where cut by the lines of trees and plants suggest every variety of square and oblong, rhombus and parallelogram. Where compactness is indispensable, the honey-yielding hexagons abound, and in her endless variety of crystals Nature has furnished us with models of the most exquisite solids. In the rainbow we have her noblest arch; in the parabola at once one of her most graceful curves and most elegant formulæ of projection.

While a consideration of the quality of *fitness* binds us to *simplicity*, that of variety, as if in counterbalance, conducts us to a just recognition of the value of *contrast* throughout all the works of creation. Simplicity becomes appreciable only when opposed to complexity; while complexity itself will, on analysis, be found to consist only of the combination of parts, individually of extreme simplicity. Mr. Owen Jones will, doubtless, have much to tell us respecting the beautiful laws of the simultaneous contrast of colour, so we may for the present content ourselves with

noticing the parallel effects, produced in obedience to the laws of the "simultaneous contrast of form." The researches of Mr. Penrose have lately developed many of these most interesting phenomena; and have not only demonstrated the fact of the scientific acquaintance of the Greeks with their peculiarities, but have shown how essential an attempt to apply such knowledge has been to the production of those exquisite monuments which, from the first moment of their creation to the present time, have maintained a position of unquestionable supremacy over every other work which human art has yet produced. The general result of Mr. Penrose's investigations tends to the assumption, that no two lines can come in contrast with one another, either in nature or in art, without the direction of the one acting, either attractively or repulsively, upon the other, and tending to diminish or exaggerate the mutual divergence of both lines, *i.e.* to increase or lessen to the eye the angle at which they meet. Thus, if to a perfectly horizontal line another be drawn, meeting it at an angle of six degrees (about half the angle at which the inclined sides of the best Greek pediments leave the surface of the cornice), it will be difficult to convince the eye, as it traces the direction of each line, that the angle has not been materially increased by an apparent deflection of the base line, and an apparent very slight drawing down of that with which it actually forms an angle of six degrees only. In order to remedy similar apparent distortions in their monuments, the Greeks have given Entasis, or swelling to their columns, inclination of the axes of their pillars towards a central line, a tendency outwards to their antæ, and exquisite convex curves to the horizontal lines of their cornices and stylobates, which would otherwise have appeared bent and crooked.

Nature, in working out her harmonies of contrast, abounds with similar optical corrections. The infinitely gentle convexity of her water sky line is precisely corrected into perfect apparent horizontality by contrast with any line at right angles to a tangent to its curve. It is by attention to the optical effects produced by the impact of lines upon one another in nature, that the artist can alone store his mind with the most graceful varieties of delicate contrast. Thus it is alone that he can appreciate the extreme beauty of her constant, minute, and generally inappreciable divergence from the precise mathematical figures, in approximation to which simplicity demands, as we have already shown, that her leading forms should be modelled.

We have now arrived at a recognition of the four principal elements which invariably concur in producing those emotions of delight, which may be regarded as infallible tests of our contact with real beauty in the productions of Nature — Variety — Fitness — Simplicity — and Contrast.

Before leaving our consideration of these elements we cannot refrain from drawing attention to that which is the crowning illustration of the effects of their co-operation — the human body. That theme, upon the reproduction of the external features of which the highest powers and the profoundest study have been lavished by the greatest artists of all time.

In its structure, the anatomist, aided by microscopic examination, discovers a *variety*, to which that of the Great Exhibition was monotony itself — a *fitness*, to which the most exquisite machines therein contained displayed no parallel — a *simplicity* of external form, which, without the

slightest display of all that marvellous internal mechanism, confines the whole in a space precisely adapted for the free working and protection of every part, and yet covers all with a soft and undulating surface, the curves of which are gentleness and *simplicity* itself.

Contrast between curve and curve, between one line of limb and another, produces in motion incessant *variety* of expression, still in obedience to the bounding conditions of simplicity. The swelling muscles, increasing as the angles of approach are diminished by their action, counteract otherwise apparent ungraceful concavities, and in that loveliest of created things, the perfect female form, every quality of beauty is freely and exquisitely balanced and united.

To recapitulate the sequence of these four great impressions, we may state, that when the attention of the student of Nature is first concentrated earnestly upon her works, his senses are bewildered by the variety of her charms. His first discovery will probably be that of the perfect individual fitness of some one object upon which he may fix for analysis; he will subsequently recognise fitness as universal. In perfect fitness he will marvel at perfect simplicity; and as he becomes acquainted with normal forms, isolated or at rest, he will learn to gather general impressions when he witnesses their combination, or varying forms in contrasted action.

As from this point his experiences increase, he will begin to appreciate marvellous affinities; he will find certain conditions universally forming the basis of propriety in all imitations of Nature. Thus he will recognise that she has a style of form and detail peculiar and appropriate to every material in which she works, and that this style of form and detail is, in every case, modified by the exact method in which her operations of manufacture are conducted. Of this no more perfect illustration can be given than the lines of fibrous reticulation which constitute the substance, and at the same time form the ornament of every leaf that blows. In the aggregate of every class he will trace general character, while the slightest variety of structure will infallibly be testified by some change in external outline. Gradually form will become with him an index to all leading attributes — a clue by which he will at once recognise the relation of bodies, or their properties, to one another. Thus, from form alone he will soon discern at a glance of what materials, and how, any particular object he may examine has been executed. This index or clue, be it remarked, never misleads; the "lamp of truth" never in Nature burns dimly, nor with fallacious fires — never refuses to illuminate those who incline to learn in a truthful and reverential spirit. One material in her productions never looks like another. Rocks have their rugged outlines—minerals their appropriate crystals — metals their colours and glittering aspects—timber its bark and cellular section—flowers their delicacy and evident fragility—even transparent bodies their varying angles of refraction — water its glassy surface when at rest, and unmistakeable curves when agitated. Never does a flower look like a piece of metal—never a piece of timber like a rock.

As the student's acquaintance with these consistencies in Nature increases, his power of generalizing will become developed. He will learn to separate constants from accidents, and to trace the distinctive lines

which convey the idea of each general family of materials, or modes of formation. He will begin to select, and to treasure up in his memory, those symbols of expression with which Nature indicates the leading characteristics of every variety of object she produces. On the amount of the artist's acquaintance with such conventionalities, or, in other words, with the written language of Nature, will entirely depend his possible success in producing by his labours sensations of delight at all equivalent to those excited by the aspect of her noblest works. Direct imitation will do next to nothing—fanciful and ignorant invention still less; it is alone by his power of wielding her weapons of expression, and making in all cases the form and the object strictly concordant, as she does, that the artist may aspire to emulate the power of giving delight, which, above all others, appears to be her paramount prerogative. Time will not permit our dwelling further upon the general inferences deducible from a study of the wonderful beauties of Nature. Enough may, however, have been enunciated concerning the most palpable principles, to warrant our assertion, that there exist conditions of harmonious relation which pervade the most exquisite forms in divine creation. It will be our pleasing task now to show how essential it is that we should catch a faint reflexion from their glories, before we can hope to succeed in the slightest degree in throwing a veil of beauty over our comparatively insignificant productions.

In entering on the second division of our subject, we shall endeavour to trace the application of principles analogous to those on which we have lately dwelt, in the first place, generally; and in the second, to the respective leading and special departments of practical art.

In the first place, then, it may be observed generally, that the endless diversity of men's tastes, and the ever-changing conditions of their education and association of ideas, demand for their productions a *variety* almost as incessant as that which pervades creation. Whenever that craving after variety has been gratified, irrespective of *fitness*, novelty has degenerated into frivolity, design into conceits, and style into mannerism and vulgarity. Without a due attention to *simplicity*, fitness has never been adequately carried out; attention has been diverted from a proper estimate of every work of art, or object of manufacture, and false impressions concerning its true and legitimate functions have been generated. Great care is necessary in applying Nature's principles of *simplicity* to human productions, since many have erred by regarding simplicity as identified with plainness, or a bare and frigid style. The true office of simplicity is to limit form and ornament to a correct expression of whatever may be the predominant sentiment intended to be conveyed by any object, and to reject all that is extraneous to that sentiment. Where, for instance, as in jewellery or in regal furniture, a sentiment of splendour is demanded, *simplicity* accords the same latitude that Nature assumes in her most brilliant sunsets or most magnificent flowers. Where, however, in the ordinary vessels which minister to the material wants of man, *simplicity* prescribes a closer range; there the greatest amount of true good taste will be invariably found in the most modest form consistent with the perfect adaptation of the vessel to its office. It may, perhaps, sound paradoxical to assert, but it is nevertheless correct to believe, that the true principle of Nature's just *simplicity* was scarcely less worthily represented by the

gorgeous chair of the Rajah of Travancore than it was by the rude, yet graceful articles of Hindoo pottery. A gown, relatively speaking, displays its just amount of simplicity, not by the dowdiness of its colour, pattern, or material, but by its due accordance with the age, position, claims to beauty, or other social accidents of its wearer.

Contrast teaches us to give a due relief to all to which we would desire to call attention. A sudden break in a long straight line, a slender necking in a continuous sweep, a sudden concavity in a generally convex outline, a bold projection starting forward from an even plane, right lines opposed to curves, segments to sections of the cone, smooth to rough surfaces, conventional forms to direct imitations of nature, all carry out the desired object, and are every one subject to the phenomena of simultaneous contrast of form. To obviate such optical delusions, allowances must be made in every case by the artist; many such corrections are constantly perceived and effected by the eye; but few, alas! by rule. In reference to such corrections, it is justly remarked by so ancient a writer as Vitruvius, that "the deception to which the sight is liable should be counteracted by means suggested by the faculty of reasoning. Since the eye alone," he continues, "is the judge of beauty, and where a false impression is made upon it, through the natural defects of vision, we must correct the apparent want of harmony in the whole by instituting peculiar proportions in particular parts." It is singular that this passage should occur in connexion with the subject of entasis, and the theory of those subtle proportions in the construction of temples, on which the Greeks bestowed such exquisite refinements of study. We cannot afford in the present Lecture to dwell further on this department of the study of form, deeply interesting though it be, since we have a full-length sketch to give, and but a kit-cat to execute it upon.

When we turn to a consideration of the united action upon human design of the general principles of consistency, exhibited in the works of Nature, we find that of all qualities which can be expressed by the objects upon which our executive ability may be occupied, the noblest, and most universally to be aimed at, is plain and manly truth. Let it ever be borne in mind that design is but a variety of speech or writing. By means of design we inscribe, or ought to inscribe, upon every object of which we determine the form, all essential particulars concerning its material, its method of construction, and its uses—by varying ornaments, and by peculiar styles of conventional treatment, we know that we shall excite certain trains of thought and certain associations of idea. The highest property of design is, that it speaks the universal language of nature, which all can read. If, therefore, men be found to systematically deceive,—by too direct an imitation of nature, pretending to be nature—by using one material in the peculiar style of conventionality universally recognised as incident to another—by borrowing ornaments expressive of lofty associations, and applying them to mean objects—by hiding the structural purpose of the article, and sanctioning by a borrowed form, the presumption that it may have been made for a totally different object, or in a perfectly different way—such men cannot clear themselves from the charge of degrading art by systematic misrepresentation, as they would lower human nature by writing or speaking a falsehood. Unfortunately,

temptations to such perversions of truth surround the growing designer. The debilitating effects of nearly a century's incessant copying without discrimination, appropriating without compunction, and falsifying without blushing, still bind our powers in a vicious circle, from which we have hardly yet strength to burst the spell. Some extraordinary stimulant could alone awaken all our energies, and that stimulant came,—it may not, perhaps, be impious to esteem Providentially,—in the form of the great and glorious Exhibition. It was but natural that we should be startled when we found that in consistency of design in industrial art, those we had been too apt to regard as almost savages were infinitely our superiors. Men's minds are now earnestly directed to the subject of restoring to symmetry all that had fallen into disorder. The conventionalities of form peculiar to every class of object, to every kind of material, to every process of manufacture, are now beginning to be ardently studied ; and instead of that vague system of instruction by which pupils were taught, that anything that was pretty in one shape was equally pretty in another, a more correct recognition of the claims of the various branches of special design, and the necessity of a far closer identification of the artist with the manufacturer, in point of technical knowledge, have been gradually stealing upwards in public estimation. Let us hope that success will crown exertion, and that in time the system of design universally adopted in this country will offer a happy coincidence with those lofty principles by means of which the seals of truth and beauty are stamped on every emanation from the creative skill of Divinity.

In approaching the more directly, though not essentially, practical portion of our subject, that of the application of Nature's principles to some of the special departments of practical art, represented in the Exhibition, we shall premise by a few considerations on Architecture and Sculpture, and the Plastic Arts.

It would be difficult to imagine a juster and more comprehensive view of the extent of direct imitation admissible in each department of the fine arts than that which was presented in the Appendix to the Third Report of the Commissioners, by Sir Charles Lock Eastlake, and republished in his " Contributions to the Literature of the Fine Arts." In a note to one of those important essays the writer observes, that " the *general* style of the formative arts is the result of a principle of selection, as opposed to indiscriminate imitation. It consists, therefore, in qualities which may be said to distinguish those arts from nature. The specific style of any one of the arts consists in the effective use of those particular means of imitation which distinguish it from other arts. Style is complete when the spectator is not reminded of any want which another art, or which nature, could supply."

Now, the specific style of architecture is especially worthy of study, since not only do similar conditions pervade all branches of design into which structural forms enter as principal elements, but of all the arts it is obviously the least imitative, and the most abstract. The effects of delight which can be produced by it, are dependent not upon a reproduction of any objects existing in creation, but upon a just display by the architect of his knowledge of those subtle general conditions, a few of which we have recognised as pervading every perfect work of nature. The beauty of

Civil Architecture, we are told by the best writers upon the subject, depends upon—1st. Convenience; 2d. Symmetry, or proportion; 3dly, Eurythmia, or such a balance and disposition of parts as evidences design and order; and, 4thly. On Ornament. In too many modern buildings, alas! we find that either convenience has been attended to and all other qualities left to chance, or, what is still worse, ornament alone aimed at and all other considerations disregarded. Let us, for the sake of example, trace the operation of the principles to which we have alluded, all of which will be found to have their origin in the provisions of nature. The wise architect will begin by considering the purpose of his building, and will so contrive its plan and leading form, as to fulfil all the utilitarian objects for which it was proposed to be constructed; in other words, he will be governed by a sense of *convenience* or *fitness*.

He will then consider how all the requisites can be most agreeably provided, and harmonious proportion combined with an expression of purpose. He will find, on recurring to nature, that every substance suitable to be employed in construction, exhibits endless *variety* in strength, weight, and texture. He will study these various qualities, and by experiment ascertain that each material possesses a certain scale of proportions, and a certain series of solids, by the employment of which, in fixed positions, its functions may be at once most economically and most fitly employed. Acting on such data, he will distribute his lines of substructure, his columns of support, his load supported, his walls to resist the driving of the elements, and he will assign to each its special proportion and form—never confounding those of one substance with another—never using iron as he would stone, or wood as glass should be. Thus aided by his sense of the functions of each portion of the structure, the material of which it may be constructed, and its condition of relative importance, the architect adjusts the appropriate dimension of every part. His work is as yet, however, only half done; his materials require bringing into graceful and regulated distribution. At this point, Eurythmia, the original of "the fairy order," steps in, bringing Geometry in her train. Doors, windows, columns, cornices, string-courses, roofs, and chimneys, are instantly disposed so as to contrast with, and balance one another, showing, by the symmetry of their arrangements, the artist's appreciation of that method and evidence of design, which indicate the restraining power of mind over matter throughout all nature,—wild as her graces may occasionally appear. The crowning difficulty yet remains behind in the adjustment of appropriate ornament. In all other departments of his art, the architect employs only pure abstractions, harmonizing with his general deductions of leading principles of beauty: in his application of ornament, however, his resources are somewhat more expanded. All decoration, the forms of which are borrowed from nature, to be pleasing, must undergo a process of conventionalizing; direct imitation, such as that which would be produced by casting from a gelatine mould, would infallibly disappoint, since the perfect reproduction of the form would lead to demands for reality, in colour, in texture, and in other qualities which it might be utterly beyond the power of any other material or processes to render, than those which Nature has herself employed in the original. The duty of the architect is, therefore, to study first of all, to employ such forms as

harmonize and contrast with his leading lines of structure,—and then in those few instances where, for the sake of adding more immediately human interest to his work, or for explaining its purpose more directly, he may desire to suggest the idea of some object existent in nature—then, and in such a case, it is his duty to symbolize rather than to express, and to strive to convey an idea of particulars and qualities only, instead of to make a necessarily imperfect reproduction, which conveys no idea at all.

The exact amount of resemblance which the hieroglyphic may be permitted to bear to that object, some ideal property of which it is intended to express, must depend upon so great a variety of circumstances that it obviously becomes one of the most delicate operations of the artist's skill to adjust the precise form in which he shall work out his ornament. The treatment of the honeysuckle by the Greeks, and the lotus by the Egyptians, are probably the happiest existing illustrations of refined appreciation of the mysteries of judicious conventionalizing.

As a general rule the less closely the artist attempts to embody nature the more safe he will be, but as there are, we conceive, some few cases which justify a nearer approximation than is generally admissible, we shall proceed to enumerate the most important of them, premising that, paramount over every other consideration, must reign an exact regard to the conventionalities incident to the material employed, and the absolute necessity of arranging the forms of the ornament, so as to contrast rightly with the adjacent geometrical lines of structure.

1st. That imitation may approximate to nature only in an inverse ratio to the resemblance of the material in which the work is to be executed to the object to be copied. Thus, the smoothness of flesh may be imitated with delicacy in white marble, and the idea of rock-work only conveyed in the same material by a completely formal and geometrical method of representation.

2d. That as imitation in all cases interests and attracts attention, it becomes necessary to restrict its use sparingly to particular situations; thus, we may, on the one hand, with propriety employ decorations suggestive of natural types, in those few important points on which we wish the eye to dwell, such as the centre of a façade, the principal doorway, or window, the starting of a staircase, or the end of a boudoir; but if, on the other hand, we employed in such leading situations mere conventional patterns, and in less important parts, ornaments in convention approaching imitation, then we should find attention concentrated on those meaner portions of the structure, and the really principal features of the design passed over and neglected.* A striking illustration of the consequences of this want of discrimination was shown by the sculptor Lequesne, in his various groups in the great Exhibition; the care he bestowed in working up his accessories, his weeds, foliage, rocks, earth, and everything else, almost entirely neutralized the interest which should have been excited by the finished treatment of the flesh of his unhappy mother and her miserable infant. The admiration which might otherwise have been given to his two groups of dogs and boys, were completely absorbed by admiration at the patience with which "each particular hair" was made to curl. To all the above-described faults the works of M. Etex offered a truly remarkable contrast, the labour in them being applied at exactly the right points.

3dly. That where ornament is contrasted by evident connexion with geometrical lines of structure, conventional imitation may be introduced. Thus in many of the marble chimney-pieces in the Exhibition, and in much of the furniture, the structural forms of which made regular panels, or conventional framework, the introduction of nicely-carved flowers or fruit, of the size of nature, and in low relief, produced an agreeable effect. Where, in others (and more particularly in some of the Austrian), the foliage, scrolls, Cupids, and all sorts of things, completely ate up the whole surface, and made up the whole structure, the effect was eminently objectionable.

4thly. That where the copy differs absolutely in bulk from the original, minutiæ of surface detail may be introduced. Thus, when we reduce a subject, such as a bunch of grapes, from the round or full relief to the lowest relievo, much of the conventionality which would otherwise be essential, may be dispensed with.

5thly. That considerable differences of scale in things of unvarying dimension, justify an approach to natural form. Thus, when we materially diminish in our reproduction any object the smallest size of which is generally known never to equal that to which it is lowered in our copy, we may safely attempt as close a conventional transcript as the material in which we work admits of. On this account delicate flowers, such as those which decorate small Dresden china vases, and which are executed with such skill in biscuit by Mr. Alderman Copeland, Mr. Minton, Mr. Grainger of Worcester, and others, form not unappropriate ornaments when confined to a scale considerably smaller than nature. In cases, however, such as that of the Dresden white camellia tree of the Exhibition, where an attempt is made to copy nature on her own scale, the effort altogether fails, and the labour so far from giving pleasure utterly fails, and becomes a trick not less inimical to good taste than the veiled figures.

6thly. That where in ornament the leading forms are geometrically disposed, as in regularly recurring scrolls, or other curves, which could never take so formal a position in nature, a rendering of her spirit, though not of her substance, may be permitted in the leaves and accessories. Thus, in much of the elaborate wood-carving produced by Mr. Rogers and others, the artificial disposition alone of the beautifully executed objects redeemed many of the groups from the charge of too close a reproduction of nature.

We have dwelt at some length upon these special circumstances, which modify conventional treatment in ornament, partly because we felt that the data applied generally to most varieties of enrichment as well as specially to architecture, and partly because we felt it necessary to indicate some of the exceptions, the comparative rarity of which tends generally to a confirmation of the accepted dogma, which prescribes that architectural ornament shall be in a remote style of convention only.

Before proceeding to the subject of Sculpture, we would fain offer one or two remarks concerning what is called style in art, for fear lest our recommendations to systematic study of elementary principles should be misapprehended. In what are generally understood as styles in the history of art, such as the Grecian, the Roman, the Gothic, the Renaissance, &c., may be recognised deeply interesting accumulations of experience

concerning the nature of men's intuitive affections for certain concatenations of form. Styles are usually complete in themselves; and though not of uniform excellence, are still generally concordant among all the various members that compose them. Whatever may have been the dominant form in each, or whatever the favourite set of ratios, proportion usually pervades each whole monument, as it may be generally traced in a few detached mouldings. Styles, therefore, may be regarded as storehouses of experiments tried, and results ascertained, concerning various methods of conventionalizing, from whence the designer of the present day may learn the general expression to be obtained, by modifying his imitations of nature on the basis of recorded experience, instead of his own wayward impulses alone. Canova, Gibson, and many of the greatest masters in art held, and hold the creed, that nature, as developed in the human form, can only be rightly appreciated by constant recurrence to, and comparison with, the conventionalities of the ancient sculpture of Greece. Mr. Penrose has shown us what beautiful illustrations of optical corrections in line may be gathered from the study of her architectural remains. Mr. Dyce, who has made himself deeply acquainted with ancient styles, thus expresses himself on the subject:—"In the first place," he remarks, "the beauties of form or of colour, abstracted from nature by the ornamentist, from the very circumstance that they are abstractions, assume in relation to the whole progress of the art the character of principles or facts, that tend, by accumulation, to bring it to perfection. The accumulated labours of each successive race of ornamentists are so many discoveries made—so many facts to be learned, treasured up, applied to a new use, submitted to the process of artistic generalization, or added to. A language and a literature of ornamental design are constituted; the former of which must be mastered before the latter can be understood; and the latter known before we are in a condition to add to its treasures. The first step, therefore, in the education of ornamentists, must be their initiation into the current and conventional language of their art, and by this means into its existing literature." By this last passage, we may fairly assume that Mr. Dyce would recommend first the study of the conventionalities of the student's specialty, and then as much as life is long enough to learn. The great previous error in art-education has been to grasp at so much vaguely, and attain so little practically.

The modifications which nature receives at the hands of the intelligent sculptor are so various, and frequently so subtle, that it would require a volume to enumerate them, and an Eastlake to write it. To night we can glance but at a very few. The first condition of the highest class of Sculpture is, that it should be allied with the noblest architecture, to which it should serve as an inscription, explaining to those capable of reading its ideal expression those purposes of the structure which it is not in the power of architecture alone to convey. In all such cases *fitness* prescribes the subject—*simplicity*, its sublimest treatment—*contrast*, the general conditions of the lines of its composition. In order to give to his works that commanding language which speaks to the heart, (the phonetic quality in Mr. Fergusson's admirable theory of beauty in art), the sculptor requires to select from his observation of the expression of individual forms, those precise lines he learns from study and experience invariably convey the

particular sensations it is his office to communicate to the mind of the beholder. It is by some such process that an approach was made by the Greek sculptors of old to attain an embodiment of their conceptions of divinity, and the *beau idéal* in loveliness of form. Time will not permit a longer reference to this topic, but it may be found touched upon with the utmost acuteness and good taste in an article on physiognomy in the last number of the "Quarterly Review," written, if any confidence may be placed in internal evidence of style, by one worthy in every respect to occupy herself in kindred studies to those which engage the attention of the President of the Royal Academy. Among the works of sculpture in the Great Exhibition which displayed the most perfect mastery over the just combination of ordinary and ideal nature, especial attention may be drawn to Gibson's and Jerichau's Hunters; Foley's Ino and Bacchus, and Boy at the Stream; Bell's Eagle-slayer; M'Dowell's Eve; De Bay's First Cradle; and Wyatt's nymph, Glycera.

The peculiar refinements of form and texture which fall within the especial province of the sculptor to carry to their highest pitch of perfection, he constantly heightens by availing himself of the effect on the senses of the simultaneous contrast of form. Thus he exaggerates the roughness of the hair and the coarse texture of every object coming in contact with his flesh, in order to give to it the exquisite smoothness of Nature; he introduces straight lines, equally balanced folds, and angular breaks into his draperies, in order to bring out the tender sweeping curves of the outlines of the limbs he so gracefully disposes. His is of a truth the happy art which begins by collecting all that is most sweet and fresh; and then by one additional touch, one further artful contrast, he "throws a perfume on the violet." In sculpture, as in every other of the decorative arts, changing circumstances bring ever-changing conventionalities, and as supreme arbiters over the propriety of one and all, still preside our original great principles — *variety, fitness, simplicity, and contrast.*

In turning to those departments of practical art into which Sculpture enters as a predominant ingredient, metal-work first presents itself to our notice. Nothing can be more apparent than the variety of properties and qualities of the several metals, nothing more consistent than to prescribe a different mode of treatment to each. Sculpture in metal, partly on account of the much greater ductility and tenacity of the material, and partly on account of its peculiar colour and power of reflecting light, can rarely, however highly its degree of finish may be carried, be mistaken for that which it professes to imitate. Hence it arises that elaborate execution of details may, and indeed should, be carried in metal to the most minute perfection. Works in gold, or silver, should, as a general rule (except in instances where an overpowering display of wealth is intended, in which case art does not much signify), be confined to small dimensions, and those relatively correspondent to the associations of idea connected with the rarity and value of each. It was from inattention to these conditions that many of the largest pieces of plate in the Exhibition failed to interest us, and that the eye dwelt with much greater complacency upon the smaller than upon the larger objects. Among the exhibitors of specimens of gold work, Messrs. Morel, Watherston and Brogden, and Froment Meurice, held the most distinguished place in point of excellence and appro-

priateness of design; among those who contributed silver work, Messrs. Hunt and Roskill, Wagner, Froment Meurice, Lebrun, Rudolphi, Garrard, Morel, &c. In parcel-gilding, inattention to the just amount of profusion of the several metals is frequently lost sight of. The gold instead of the silver is allowed to preponderate on the surface, and the improbable idea conveyed that the vessel is made of the nobler metal, and inlaid with the baser. It would be a sad want of a due recognition of rare talent, if in allusion to metal-work an acknowledgment was omitted of the rare talents of M. Vechte, by whom the exquisite vase and unfinished shield, exhibited by Messrs. Hunt and Roskill, were made for those enterprising manufacturers. Whoever examines the marvellous grace and refinement of the modelling and chasing of these objects will admit that there is ample room for improvement in English silversmith's work of the highest class,—and for refinements which, though perhaps little appreciated at present, must sooner or later become estimated at a value equal to those fabulous sums which are constantly paid for mutilated etchings of the great masters, cabinet pictures by Hobbima, Wouvermans, and Metsu; or factitious specimens of the great Cellini. In M. Vechte's design for the Goodwood cup of the present year, he has shown us what his idea of the application of high style to metal-work should be; and if in its execution he rivals only that of the portion of a vase he wrought for M. Devandeuve of Paris, of a portion of which I am happily enabled this evening to exhibit a cast, or the shield now before us, fortunate indeed will be the winner of so masterly a work of art. In bronze-work, although in small objects we may certainly still find a difficulty in competing with the admirable specimens exhibited by Messrs. Collas, Barbedienne, Vittoz, Matifat, Susse, and other Parisian bronzists, still, upon a large scale, the casting and finishing of Mr. Foley's beautiful "Boy at the Stream," by Mr. Hatfield, and Mr. Bell's "Eagle Slayer" and "Andromeda," by the Coalbrookdale Company, left little to desire. In the application not only of correct principles of design, but of the details of the electro-galvanic process, Messrs. Elkington's display was in almost all points thoroughly satisfactory. In brass and mixed work Mr. Winfield's, Mr. Messenger's, and other collections, maintained, and, indeed, tended to raise the reputation of Birmingham. It was gratifying to be enabled to notice, with regard to furnishing brass-work, that direct imitations of things which, however beautiful they may be in nature, have no business stuck about one's curtains; lilies and convolvuluses, looking all alive, were on the decrease; and that correct conventionalities, the unobtrusive and graceful forms of which were suitable for execution in metal, were rapidly taking their place. While in ornamental iron and brass work applied to stoves, Messrs. Stewart and Smith displayed the most exquisite workmanship, Messrs. Hoole and Robson manifested the most correct appreciation of the conventionalities to be observed in the treatment of those metals. For much of this movement in the right direction, more particularly for the idea of the introduction of clean iron into ornamental casting, the public are indebted to the artistic ability of Mr. Stevens. Messrs. Feetham, Pierce, Jeakes, and Bailey, likewise showed much good taste in the goods contributed by them.

When we pursue the subject of sculpture, or plastic art, as carried out in other materials, such as the woods which are used for furniture, &c. &c.,

we are led at once to apply in all cases the test of fitness before we can unhesitatingly approve the principles upon which the greater portion of what was shown in the Exhibition appeared to have been designed, and much, we are sorry to say, would not quite stand the ordeal. In too many instances, in the furniture, fitness and structure were entirely disregarded; table-tops were supported on bulrushes, and what should have been the simple and rigid portions of looking-glasses, cabinets, &c., all made up of flowers, scrolls, figures, and so on, which apparently no material, and certainly no spiritual connexion, held together. In the treatment of furniture, much was to be learnt from the sensible construction of poor Pugin's mediæval woodwork. In it the refinements of joinery were all made the most of; the object was well put together, and serviceable; while in the panels and other intervals of the framework as much ornament was inserted as was consistent with the purposes of the article. Where Nature puts her most delicate work she always contrives a special shelter for it; her most exquisite spars and stalactites are ever protected, her tender shoots are always shielded until they acquire strength to stand exposure. It would be well if many of our wood-carvers in that respect followed her example.

The mere possession of an elaborate bed such as that in which, according to a satirical Frenchman, "On ne pourrait même bailler sans casser un Cupidon," would be a continual annoyance. The very idea would be irritating of having a looking-glass covered over with all sorts of statuettes and ornaments in high reliefs, from which any morning the slightest touch of a housemaid's brush might bring down two or three little "unprotected females." The really true system of arranging ornament is in that respect generally thoroughly well understood by the French; who, if they put delicate ornament to look at, insert it where it will be quite safe from accident, and put strength and flatness to use or come in contact with. Not only in a technical, but in an artistic point of view, this subduing of ornament is excellent, since while the effect of decoration is obtained the bounding lines and surfaces are kept broad and simple. Any one unacquainted with the attention habitually paid to this preservation of ornament, who had been allowed to pass his hand over the richly ornamented pistols, daggers, vase handles, finest bronzes, and best French furniture, would have been much surprised at the comparatively little obstruction it would have ordinarily met with in its passage, over even the richest objects. We cannot leave the subject of furniture without glancing at the extremely appropriate mode of ornamenting it by *marqueterie*, or inlaid wood — a process which was carried to the highest perfection in the productions of Messrs. Trollope and Sons. That process is to woodwork something like what enamelling or damascening should be to metal-work. A few among the many agreeable specimens of design as applied to furniture were Barbetti's cabinet, Ringuet le Prince's ebony cabinet, Snell's looking-glass, Trollope's bedroom suite, Jackson and Graham's sideboard, and Rogers' cradle. Among the specimens of cabinet carving in wood were many which it would appear impossible to surpass as pieces of execution, although in several the extreme attenuation of substance was suited rather for metal than for woodwork: conspicuous among these were a group of flowers and dead game, by Wallis, of Louth; subjects in high relief, by Lienard; a virgin in a

niche, by Knecht, of Paris; and some of Mr. Rogers' productions. In several of the plastic materials, such as gutta percha, carton pierre, papier maché, canabic, stamped leather, &c., much good design was exhibited, although the tendency, more particularly in the gutta percha, was rather in the direction of a plethora of ornament. Nature, it should be recollected, abhors monotony even of beauty, and there is nothing so cloying and fatiguing as too much sweetness, from which perpetual plainness would be a haven of refuge. In respect to these materials a good deal of misapprehension has prevailed of late years; they have been called "shams," and a variety of names which they intrinsically in no wise deserve. When people paint and grain papier mâché to make it look like oak or other valuable woods, or when they dust sand over carton pierre to make it look like stone, then certainly they perpetrate meannesses at which good taste is disgusted the instant the deception is found out; but when the materials are used simply as ornaments, either in a uniform colour or picked out with any variety of tints, everybody recognises the nature of the material; and there can then be no more *sham* or *trick* in employing them than there would be in using Caen stone for a pulpit instead of marble, or iron for a column instead of gold.

There is, perhaps, no substance in the manufacture and design of which so great an improvement has taken place in this country within the last ten years as in that of glass. Witness for manufacture the glass palace and its wonderful fountain; and for design, the exquisite articles contributed by Messrs. Green, Pellatt, Richardson, Bacchus, Rice Harris, and others. The subject of glass, its materials, appropriate form, colour, and other conditions, having been most ably treated in the last lecture of this series, renders it unnecessary now to make any further observation on the subject. We may be permitted, however, in drawing attention to some exquisite specimens of Messrs. Green's manufacture, to simply assert, that never at any other period has anything corresponding to the present perfect execution of glass-work existed; and that so soon as the cumbrous, lumpy decanters, tumblers, and rummers, in which our fathers delighted, shall have been all broken, there will be very little left to desire in respect to table-glass.

With regard to china and the group of analogous materials, such as porcelain, terra cotta, &c., time compels us to be brief. In all such objects, the fragility of the material warns us against rash projections, and yet we constantly recognize them stuck on, as though merely for the purpose of being knocked off. The primitive arrangement of the potter's wheel, and the plasticity of the material, yielding beneath his hand curves, which in Etrurian and Magna Grecian ware we admire as exquisite, direct us as it were to simplicity in all works in such materials. So long as by the readiest means, and by a little education of the workman, we might obtain forms quite as beautiful and as various as those which we always have and always shall admire in the antique, there can exist no excuse for casting octagon and hexagon jugs, or making teacups up out of half-a-dozen curves.

In many respects it was gratifying to observe that the most beautiful objects, upon the production and decoration of which the highest artistic talent of France had been employed in the Royal Manufactory

at Sèvres, almost without exception, were rigidly simple in their outlines, and produced structurally by that primitive instrument, we must ever respect and associate with pottery—the potter's wheel. Much information as to the proprieties of the form and ornament of china might be derived from a study of some of the beautiful Indian and Tunisian ware; and if our exquisite mechanical execution were combined with their feeling for pure form, and the proper application of not too much ornament, effects of surpassing beauty might doubtless be produced. As it is, the great resources shown by Mr. Minton in all his numerous productions, and by Mr. Alderman Copeland, in his very choice, though not so varied display, impress us with the idea that all that is now wanting, is for public taste to judiciously regulate their producing powers, and to ask for a little less novelty and a little more perfection.

We have now very hurriedly run through the leading classes of objects on which practical art operates directly, and which possess what the Germans call "selbstandigkeit," that is to say, an independent structural existence. There remain for us to notice those which apply particularly to surfaces, and the treatment of which consequently involves the consideration of superficies only. As general rules for the guidance of those who are called upon to design such objects—whether they take the form of wall decorations or pavements, textile fabrics of which the pattern is produced either in the loom or by printing, of mosaic pavements, diapers for stained glass or paperhangings, no better hints can be given than those which have been expressed by Mr. Owen Jones in his notice in the "Journal of Design" of the Oriental objects contributed to the Great Exhibition. We are told most truly, that one "guiding principle of their admirable ornamentation appears to be that their decoration was always what may be called surface decoration. Their general guiding forms were first considered and these forms decorated. Their flowers are not natural flowers, but conventionalized by the material in which they worked. We do not see, as in European works, a highly-wrought imitation of a natural flower, with its light and shade struggling to stand out from the ground on which it is worked, but a conventional representation sufficiently near to suggest an image to the mind, without destroying the unity of the objects it is intended to decorate. There is a total absence of shadow. The patterns of their shawls and fabrics are harmonious and effective from the proper distribution of form and colour, and do not require to be heightened in effect by strong and positive oppositions; the great aim appears to be that objects viewed at a distance should present a neutralized bloom—each step nearer exhibits fresh beauties, a close inspection the means whereby such effects are produced. In their diapers and scroll-work, one of the means whereby their harmonizing effect is produced, appears to be that the ornament and the ground occupy equal areas; to obtain this requires no ordinary skill, and can only be arrived at by highly-trained hands and minds. In their conventional foliage in all cases, we find the forms flowing out from a parent stem; the space which has to be filled, however varied in form, being accomplished with the most exquisite skill. We never see here ornaments

dotted down, as in modern works, the existence of which cannot be accounted for; every flower, however distant, can be traced to its branch and root."

These are but a few of the general principles which should aid the designer of surface decoration, hundreds more there are which vary in their precise form of application with every special case and subject. Where, for instance, on the one hand, drapery has to be ornamented, which is intended to cling tightly to, and exhibit the form it covers, it would obviously be absurd to introduce a bold pattern of strong contrasts, the lines of which would arrest the eye, instead of allowing it to travel over the outlines and inflections of the form it is intended to veil, but not conceal; where, on the other hand, material has to fulfil the office of a hanging, such as a portiere or curtain, or a loose covering, there a bold pattern may frequently be introduced with the happiest effect. This principle of costume was finely understood by the Venetian and Florentine weavers, and by the Italian ladies of the sixteenth century, as may be seen in many a splendid old female portrait by Titian, Giorgione, or Parmegiano.*

Of the various appropriate modes of conventionalizing nature, scarcely any is more agreeable than that which is frequently adopted by the skilful paper-stainer, in what are commonly called panel papers. It consists in treating as a picture flowers and other objects, grouped with scarcely any apparent artifice, in their natural forms and sizes, and with all their lights, subdued shades and reflections, but with no cast shades. This, at first sight, would appear to be too direct an imitation of nature to be agreeable, and therefore liable to objection—and so unless care is taken it very frequently is. Now the method of preserving all that is requisite is effected by representing the flowers by successive blotches of body colour dabbed on, with no attempt to soften the edges or conceal the method by which the effect is produced. Thus, at a little distance the decoration looks, not like a group of flowers, for that would be a mistake, but like a very clever sketch of a group of flowers framed and inserted in the panel. Where direct imitation of natural flowers, with endless tiresome repeats, are carried out, either in paper-hangings, block or cylinder printed goods, in carpets, damasks, or other woven hangings, the effect is rarely, if ever, agreeable, however marvellous the manufacturing power may be which can effect such elaborate reproductions.† In woven goods, as was most clearly shown in an excellent lecture by Mr. Wornum, recently delivered at the School of Design, the conditions of manufacture constantly modify the structure of patterns; and those even which have been originally derived from nature, frequently become reformed to such an extent in putting on or draughting, that the best mode of convention, that which is induced by the process of manufacture makes that agreeable, which if it could have been more perfectly carried out would most probably have been extremely faulty. It was impossible to hear that gentleman's animated description of what intervened between the sale of a design, say of a ribbon, to a

* These principles were illustrated by reference to fine specimens of English paperhangings, lent by Messrs. Townsend and Parker and Woollams.

† Mr. Wyatt here drew attention to some beautiful fabrics exhibited by Messrs. Blakeley, Lewis and Allenby, Lees and Co., Liddiard, &c.

manufacturer, and the manufacturer's delivery of the ribbon to the warehouseman, without feeling deep regret; either that the manufacturer knew so little of design as to suffer the lines to become distorted in execution, or that the designer knew so little of manufacture as to be at the mercy of the workman by whom his design was brought into the technical form in which alone it could be manufactured. If with his design he had been in a position to give to the manufacturer a rough outline sketch of the full size of the requisite ruled paper, if for a woven pattern, the outlines would have had only to be traced on to the ruled paper, and no serious mistakes or bungles in form could have subsequently taken place, particularly, if from time to time the artist had had an opportunity of inspecting the preparations made for the execution of his design.

The subject of surface decoration is one which involves such infinite varieties of conventional treatment, which demands so large a study of the effects of complicated geometrical subdivisions in mosaic; and, in fact, so large a field of vision, that we feel that within the limits of one lecture, it is quite impossible to systematize a subject which could scarcely be fitly treated in half-a-dozen. We are fain, therefore, to draw to a close this our most difficult attempt to define the principles which should determine form in the decorative arts. In doing so, however, we would pause for a few moments to remark that, although for the sake of perspicuity, we have throughout this evening adopted the language of analysis, it must be borne in mind that our divisions are altogether arbitrary, and have no existing prototypes in the great scheme of creation. In that, subdivide as we may, all is unity and omnipotence. *Variety*, *fitness*, *simplicity*, *contrast*, and perfect *truth*, are all swallowed up in one thing perfectly good, and therefore perfectly beautiful — Divine will — that Divine will, which in the beginning created the heaven and the earth, and saw that everything created was very good. Surely, we, whose privilege it is to be fashioned in God's own image, may strive to follow reverently and closely, though at an infinite distance, that great example which has been given us; and study, so far as lies in human power, to ensure that all we do, and all we make, may, like the great works of nature, be all "very good."